

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of inputting a character in a portable device having a display screen, comprising:
 - a step of maintaining a database in which at least one character image and character data are recorded corresponding to each other;
 - a step of locating a pointer at a predetermined pointer start area on the display screen;
 - a step of sensing the movement of an object which moves being in contact with an optical interface unit of the portable device;
 - a step of inputting a character by moving the pointer from the pointer start area according to the sensed movement; and
 - a step of returning the pointer to the pointer start area according to the input of the character
- wherein the step of inputting a character by moving the pointer from the pointer area according to the sensed movement comprises:
 - a step of generating the character image corresponding to the sensed movement.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein in the step of returning the pointer to the pointer start area according to the input of the character, the pointer is returned to the pointer start area in case that it is sensed that the object has ended the contact with the optical interface unit.

3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein in the step of inputting a character by moving the pointer from the pointer start area according to the sensed movement, the character is inputted in case that a character located at the area in which the pointer has moved is selected by a user.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
in the step of sensing the movement of an object which moves being in contact with an optical interface unit of the portable device, the movement is sensed by measuring at least one of the speed and the distance of the movement of the object;
and

in the step of inputting a character by moving the pointer from the pointer start area according to the sensed movement, the pointer is moved in response to at least one of the measured speed and distance.

5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A computer readable medium in which a computer-executable program for executing a method of claim 1 is recorded. ~~inputting a character in a portable device having a display screen, comprising:~~

~~a step of locating a pointer at a predetermined pointer start area on the display screen;~~

~~a step of sensing the movement of an object which moves being in contact with an optical interface unit of the portable device;~~

~~a step of inputting a character by moving the pointer from the pointer start area according to the sensed movement; and~~

~~a step of returning the pointer start area according to the input of the character.~~

7. (currently amended) A portable device capable of inputting characters, comprising:

a database maintaining at least one character image and character data corresponding to the character image;

a display unit for displaying a predetermined character or a pointer on a predetermined display screen;

an optical interface unit contacting with a predetermined object, emitting an optical signal to the object, and receiving an optical reflection signal reflected from the object;

an optical signal sensing unit sensing the movement of the object by interpreting the received optical reflection signal and; and

a pointer control unit locating the pointer at a pointer start area on the display screen, inputting a character by moving the pointer from the pointer start area according to the sensed movement, and returning the pointer to the pointer start area according to the input of the character

a character image generating unit generating a pointer character image corresponding to the sensed movement; and

a character identifying/extracting unit identifying the character image corresponding to the pointer character image from the database and extracting the character data corresponding to the identified character image.

8. (original) The portable device of claim 7, wherein the pointer control unit returns the pointer to the pointer start area in case that it is sensed that the object has ended the contact with the optical interface unit.

9. (canceled)

10. (original) The portable device of claim 7, wherein the optical interface unit comprises a predetermined object surface to which the optical signal is transmitted, a lens, and an image surface, the object surface, the lens, and the image surface are horizontally disposed.